

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 16  
By Beavers

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the ministers and congregation of Woodbury Church of Christ upon their 175th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, the churches of our nation have been an integral part of our history as a people and have had an unparalleled impact in forming and maintaining a stable and just society; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; one such estimable institution, shining as a ray of hope in the Woodbury community for 175 years, is Woodbury Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Woodbury Church of Christ comprise one such laudable congregation who will be celebrating the church's 175th Anniversary with a special service on Sunday, March 13, 2005 at 9:30 A.M with guest speaker Dr. Billy Smith, a "home-grown" son in the faith and now Dean of Biblical Studies at Freed-Hardeman University; and

WHEREAS, the celebration will be a time of reflecting on the past, giving thanks for the present, and joyfully looking forward to a future filled with spiritual enrichment; and

WHEREAS, Woodbury Church of Christ traces its roots to before the establishment of Woodbury or Cannon County, and specifically to the baptism of the wife of Dr. W. D. Gowan, Elizabeth Gowan, by Tolbert Fanning in 1830; since that time, the devout spirit of the congregational descendants has remained strong enough to last 175 years; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Woodbury Church of Christ, since the time it was organized, has experienced numerous changes, not only in the lives and hearts of the laypeople and the pastorate, but also in the church structure itself; and

WHEREAS, located at 100 East Water Street in Woodbury, Tennessee, the land on which the house of worship now stands was purchased by William West who provided the lot to the church; entrusted to Thomas G. Wood, the property was held in trust for the church until 1842, at which time the first church building was erected; the congregation later witnessed the completion of the auditorium, which seated 250, on March 1, 1889, and has also seen two additions to the auditorium, in 1994 and 2003, that will provide for the continued growth of the church family; and

WHEREAS, just as the church's good works have remained constant, so has this special place been witness to many renowned preachers; those whose sermons have graced the faithful congregation at Woodbury Church of Christ have included Tolbert Fanning, the Sewell brothers (Jesse, Caleb, Isaac, and Elisha), James Didwell, Granville Lipscomb, F.B. Srygley, E.A. Elam, C.M. Pullias, T.B. Larrimore, H. Leo Boles, C.E. Brewer, G.C. Brewer, and A.C. Pullias; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the church has flourished under the able guidance of admirable ministry; in 1941, O.P. Baird began work as the congregation's first located minister, followed by Billy Nicks in 1946 and W.W. Stephens' brief service in 1949; Vardeman Forrister commenced his service in 1951, serving until 1953; Farris Harper to 1955; William Lewis to 1960; Billy Newby to 1965; Turner Paseur to 1973; Don Cain to 1974; Max Miller to 1976; and T. Pierce Brown to 1978; and

WHEREAS, the current ministers who have dedicated their time to sharing their gifts include Herb Alsup, Jr. who has served for 26 years, Al Bugg who has served for 11 years, and Howard Swann and Tim Knox who have both contributed to the life of this church for 7 years; and

WHEREAS, following Jesus's command to "go ye forth and preach," the church's members are also devoted to sharing the joy and peace that can only be found within a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; the church's active evangelistic program, involving

nearly forty members, includes local, national, and international activities, including the establishment of new churches in both Emerald Beach, Florida and Cleveland, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the church's members have long made prominent contributions to the civic, educational, and social fabric of Tennessee and the world, as evidenced by the church's active benevolence programs, which have included assistance to the victims of the tsunami natural disaster in Asia, and the donation of food and clothing to Welch, West Virginia, in addition to satisfying many areas of need in Cannon County through the church's OutReach Center; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Woodbury Church of Christ have also cultivated a moral and principled youth whose spiritual engagement is enhanced through their participation in the annual summer camp held at Short Mountain Bible Camp, which provides young people a supportive atmosphere of Christian fellowship and a chance to hone their leadership skills; and

WHEREAS, Woodbury Church of Christ is among those exemplary institutions upon which a just and orderly society is based; it is a safe haven for our citizens to worship their Creator as a community of faith and from which they reach out to the secular community as a response to God's saving grace; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Woodbury Church of Christ is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and Nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Woodbury and Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Woodbury Church of Christ, thank the good people of this historic congregation and their ministers for their notable service to their Lord and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.